



Behind the Scenes

Executive Director's Report

The Access Services Board of Directors met on April 27, 2026.

- > The Board appointed Martin Gombert as Vice-Chair to replace Theresa de Vera, who resigned from the Access Board of Directors.
- > The Board approved two IT contracts to support upcoming technology projects and existing IT systems.
- > The Board heard two presentations, one on the upcoming service provider RFP for the Northern region and the other one on a peer fare survey and existing fare media options for Access riders.
- > The Board approved a two-year extension through June 30, 2028 to the service provider contract for the Santa Clarita Region with the City of Santa Clarita.

The next full meeting of the Board of Directors is scheduled for May 26, 2026.

Andre Colaiace
Executive Director

Access serves popular Abilities Expo in Long Beach

It has been about twenty years since the Abilities Expo, which is the premier event in our area for persons with disabilities to meet, network and explore new technologies, has been in Long Beach. The long-running Expo usually happens in Los Angeles at the Convention Center but this year was hosted at the Long Beach Convention Center.



Marissa Bode from the popular film *Wicked* hosted a question-and-answer session. There was a section devoted to adaptive sports and video gaming. Free services were provided to attendees, such as wheelchair repair and complimentary loaner electric scooters.

403 riders took Access to the Expo, with Saturday being the most popular day of travel. 789 total trips took place, including pickup and drop-off. It took coordination from staff from Access, contractors, the Expo and the Long Beach Convention Center in order to make the event as smooth and seamless as possible for riders. Contractors worked hard to make the event a success, briefing drivers and working across regional lines to facilitate a good experience, which has become an Access tradition.

"Seeing staff from all four basin regions and Access come together, many for the first time, and operate as an organized team is always impressive, ensuring the passengers experience meets or exceeds expectations even in a new location," said California Transit Operations Manager Daniel Ponce. He was the point person on the ground for the West-Central region.

The agency also had a booth inside the Long Beach Convention Center in order to conduct outreach and meet riders and potential riders.

"No news is good news," said Colin Obeso, Access Senior Road Safety Inspector and primary point person for the Expo. He

commented on the lack of significant difficulties during the event.

The event was handled from an emergency management perspective, which is a typical practice for large events. Detailed plans were made, meetings were held with stakeholders and staff presence was significant. The Access Emergency Operations Center was activated at duty officer status. Dozens of hours of work resulted in a success, despite the change of venue.

Alex Chrisman
Emergency Management Coordinator

APTA 2026 Legislative Conference

On April 12–14, Access Board Chair Doran Barnes, Access Board Director Lee Burner, and I attended APTA's 2026 Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. The event drew over 600 public transportation professionals to engage federal policymakers and advance priorities for transit investment.



The conference featured briefings from policy experts, Members of Congress, and U.S. Department of Transportation officials, along with opportunities to connect with APTA member agencies. These conversations help strengthen relationships that support accessible, well-funded transit and infrastructure.

A key focus was APTA's Surface Transportation Authorization Recommendations as Congress begins looking toward the next federal surface transportation authorization law. Members emphasized the need to maintain and build on current funding levels.

The conference concluded with advocacy meetings on Capitol Hill, where members met with congressional offices to share on-the-ground needs and reinforce the value of continued federal investment in public transportation.

Randy Johnson
Director of Government Affairs and Outreach

Commendations

West/Central Region

"The driver was very professional and knew how to handle a disabled person. He walked me to and from the vehicle, assisted me with my walker, and made sure I was seated in the vehicle before taking it. He left a great impression, and I was overall satisfied."

Mandel Baker
Rider since September 2024

Northern Region

"Reservationist Mirna was very patient and explained everything perfectly. She does her job well, has a great attitude, and is very special."

Maria Pena
Rider since July 2011